NewsRelease

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Langley Research Center
Hampton, Virginia 23681-2199

Kathy Barnstorff
Office: 864-9886/cellular: 344-8511
Email: k.a.barnstorff@larc.nasa.gov

For Release: April 18, 2001

RELEASE NO. 01-029

NASA OPEN HOUSE APRIL 28

NASA Langley opens doors to the future

Infrared technology can spot all sorts of things, including possible weaknesses in the skin of an aircraft that could lead to accidents. But what does it show about the human body?

Find out for yourself when NASA's Langley Research Center open its doors to the public for the first time in four years on Saturday, April 28. The original home of the Mercury 7 astronauts is inviting the community to see what researchers have been up to lately and how technologies developed in Hampton Roads will revolutionize air travel and advance space exploration.

NASA Langley has played a pivotal role in aviation and space since 1917. Its scientists, engineers and technicians continue to invent the future of aerospace in 220 buildings on 800 acres in Hampton.

Twenty of those buildings will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on April 28 during Langley's open house, "Technology Leadership for the New Millennium." Researchers will be on hand to explain their discoveries. Plus, visitors will get a chance to try some NASA innovations.

For instance, NASA scientists can determine if spacecraft and aircraft are structurally sound … without having to take them apart. Langley researchers have adapted those nondestructive evaluation technologies for open house so they can be used by kids of all ages! Among the things that visitors will be able to do: use flying inspection robots to spot mechanical flaws, see what's inside their toys thanks to x-ray tomography and test their marksmanship with a paintball meteoroid impact simulator, gauging the results with advanced sensors.

NASA Langley will also open its main hangar so the community can check out aircraft used to test technologies to make flying safer and more efficient. Ten aircraft from small general aviation planes to a passenger jet will be on display. Also scheduled to make an appearance in the hangar will be 89-year-old female aviation pioneer, Elinor Smith. Smith took her first plane ride in 1917 and received her pilot's license, signed by Orville Wright, at age 15.

- more -

A NASA astronaut will also be on hand for the Langley Open House, Mission Specialist candidate Garrett Reisman is a certified flight instructor, who loves to fly, ski, snowboard, rock climb and SCUBA dive. The 33-year-old New Jersey native designed the thruster-based attitude control system for NASA's Earth Observing System (EOS) PM-1 spacecraft, before being selected as an astronaut in June 1998. Reisman reported to NASA for astronaut training in August 1998, and has spent the years since then learning space shuttle and International Space Station systems as well as water and wilderness survival techniques. He is scheduled to speak to groups in the Pearl Young Theater at 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. **Reisman will also be available for media interviews from 9 to 10 a.m. and 12:30 to 1 p.m. in the Pearl Young Theater.**

Reisman will be speaking not far from where astronauts before him learned to walk on the moon and where engineers designed and tested space shuttle tires. Both those facilities, Impact Dynamics Research and Aircraft Landing Dynamics, will also be open for visitors. Plus food and souvenirs will be for sale.

It's NASA Langley's "Technology Leadership for the New Millennium," a public open house Saturday, April 28, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Langley Research Center is located near the corner of Commander Shepard Boulevard and Armistead Avenue in Hampton.

For more information, please check the Internet at http://openhouse.larc.nasa.gov

- end -